

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

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January 25, 2007

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

SUBJECT: REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESTAURANT MEALS PROGRAM FOR THE HOMELESS, ELDERLY, AND DISABLED USING ELECTRONIC BENEFIT (EBT) CARDS TO PURCHASE PREPARED MEALS (BOARD ORDER #38 - FEBRUARY 4, 2003)

This is to provide you with an update on the Restaurant Meals Program for Homeless, Elderly, and Disabled Food Stamp Participants using Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Cards to purchase prepared meals. As you may recall, the Restaurant Meals Program allows homeless, elderly, and disabled Food Stamp participants to purchase prepared meals using their EBT cards at restaurants that have a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the County and have been certified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) to accept Food Stamp benefits.

The Restaurant Meals Program for the Homeless, Elderly and Disabled celebrated its first year of operation in July 2006. Currently, we have a total of 260 signed MOUs which includes 198 restaurants participating in the program and another 62 restaurants in various stages of processing by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and DPSS.

In August 2006, my staff began a campaign to increase Restaurant Meals Program awareness and utilization. The campaign strategies include the following:

- Making presentations to district staff and community partners.
- Working with restaurant owners to develop a stronger relationship.
- Mailing Restaurant Meals Program brochures and interest letters to targeted restaurants that are not currently participating in the program.

A special mailer was also sent to eligible elderly and disabled food stamp households on December 29, 2006, notifying them of their eligibility to the Restaurant Meals Program and providing them with a list of participating restaurants.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

The implementation of our campaign to increase program awareness and utilization has resulted in a substantial increase in Restaurant Meals Program participation. Program statistics show that monthly transactions and sales more than doubled from August 2006 to December 2006, as reflected in the chart below.

MONTH AND YEAR	NUMBER OF SALES TRANSACTIONS	NUMBER OF RESTAURANTS PARTICIPATING	AMOUNT OF SALES	AVERAGE TRANSACTION AMOUNT
August 2006	3429	124	\$26,910.00	\$ 7.84
September 2006	3766	122	\$30,508.00	\$ 8.10
October 2006	4827	131	\$36,370.00	\$ 7.53
November 2006	5894	136	\$44,753.00	\$ 7.59
December 2006	7686	150	\$59,191.00	\$ 7.70

I will provide you with our next semi-annual report in July 2007.

BY:bs

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors